

WHAT'S *New* in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors, and workers
in the District of Columbia*

Friday, February 3, 2006

MAYOR, COMMUNITY ADVOCATES PUSH FOR DC TO HAVE ITS OWN CRIME LAB

Joined by community activists and public safety officials, Mayor Williams this week said he is working hard to win federal assistance for a DC forensic laboratory whose functions would be critical to the investigation and successful prosecution of murders, rapes and other crimes where DNA profiles are a factor. Currently, the District relies on the FBI Crime Lab in Quantico, Virginia, and other agencies for forensic lab functions – a situation that can impact the investigation and prosecution of some cases. Across the country, DNA analysis has increasingly been used to solve murders, rapes and other crimes where biological material from the criminal was left behind at the scene. In making his comments, Mayor Williams cited the recent closure of the December 1983 murder of Raymonde Plantiveau, a 57-year-old French citizen who was raped and killed inside a relative's home in the 1900 block of 39th Street, NW. About two years ago, MPDC investigators reviewing "cold cases" identified the Plantiveau homicide as one that could potentially benefit from DNA analysis. Investigators tracked down semen evidence in the police Property Division, and submitted it to the FBI Crime Lab in Quantico, Virginia, for analysis. The FBI ran the sample through CODIS – the Combined DNA Index System – which produced a positive "hit" that eventually led to the arrest of a suspect, 53-year-old Melvin Jackson Jr. of Northeast. "This case highlights the amazing power and potential of DNA testing, but it also illustrates why DC needs its own, fully staffed, state-of-the-art crime lab to handle not only DNA analysis but the full range of modern forensics testing that is needed to fight and solve crime in our city," the Mayor said. Mayor Williams said that while both the DC Council and the US Congress have provided funds to begin the research and design of a forensic lab, further support is needed for the completion of the design, construction and staffing of the facility. Community advocates Valencia Mohammed and Debra Evans Bailey stood with Mayor Williams in supporting the crime lab and calling for more community involvement to help solve crimes.

① Read the full news release at:
<http://dc.gov/news/release.asp?id=836>

CHIEF RAMSEY SWEARS IN NEW CAPTAINS, LIEUTENANTS

The supervisory ranks of the MPDC are getting a boost. On Friday afternoon, Chief Ramsey administered the oath of office to 10 new captains and 22 new lieutenants during a promotional ceremony at Galaudet University in Northwest. Chief Ramsey announced the promotions a few weeks ago, and the newly promoted officials have completed a supervisory training course designed specifically for their new ranks. The newly promoted members are being assigned to a variety of units, with most going to the seven police districts. For example, the new lieutenants are being assigned primarily as team leaders in the Police Service Areas, where they will direct community policing and crime fighting efforts. In his remarks to the promotees and their families, Chief Ramsey said the challenges facing supervisors – and all members of the MPDC – have probably never been greater. "I recently revised our Mission Statement to more accurately reflect the new reality of crime fighting in the District of Columbia – a mission that encompasses not only traditional crimes such as robbery and burglary and auto theft, but also the crime of terrorism and the very real threat that it poses to our communities," Ramsey said. "Now that you are lieutenants and captains of police, your responsibilities in carrying out this dual mission – and in making our city even safer and more secure – are greater than ever before," he added.

VIOLENT CRIME DOWN, PROPERTY OFFENSES UP IN JANUARY, PRELIMINARY STATISTICS SHOW

The number of violent crimes reported in DC declined by 8 percent during January, but that reduction was offset by a 3 percent rise in property offenses, according to preliminary statistics from the MPDC. There were 2,550 serious crimes reported last month, compared with 2,534 offenses reported in January 2005, an increase of about sixth-tenths of 1 percent in the Crime Index for the month. The reduction in violent crimes was driven by a 14 percent drop in robberies — a possible turnaround from recent trends in robbery. Preliminary statistics for 2005 show that robbery was the only Crime Index offense to increase last year, rising nearly 6 percent. Among other violent crimes, reported sexual assaults also declined to 11 last month, from 22 in January 2005. Homicides were unchanged for the month, and serious assaults rose by 4 percent. Among property crimes, both burglary (+10%) and theft from auto (+29%) reports rose during January 2006, the preliminary data show. Other types of thefts (-11%) and stolen autos (-7%) both declined in January. Four of the seven police districts recorded reductions in crime last month, while there were increases in three districts.

DISTRICT TO OFFER FREE CHILD SAFETY SEAT INSPECTIONS

Three DC government agencies — the MPDC, the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) and the Fire and EMS Department — along with DC Safe Kids will observe Child Passenger Safety Week by offering free inspections of child passenger car seats by certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians. The inspections will take place from February 13-18 at a variety of locations throughout the city. The emphasis will be on training parents and caregivers to install and adjust their car seats correctly. At each location, technicians will teach parents and caregivers proper installation and adjustment techniques so that they can meet their responsibility to make sure children are always properly restrained in a moving vehicle. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, approximately 73 percent of all child passenger restraints — more than 80 percent of car seats and about 40 percent of booster seats — are used incorrectly. In a crash, a child restrained incorrectly is 3.5 times more likely to be seriously injured than a child who is properly restrained. DC law requires that all children under the age of 8 be properly seated in an infant, toddler or booster seat, and that 8- to 16-year-olds be secured with a safety belt.

NEWS & NOTES

New PSA Created in 5D. Effective Sunday, February 5, 2006, the Fifth District has one more Police Service Area. The previous PSA 502, which covers several neighborhoods in Northeast DC, is being divided into two PSAs. The area north of Rhode Island Avenue, NE, remains PSA 502; the area south of the avenue is the new PSA 505. The Fifth District now has five PSAs. For information on 5D, including a map of the new PSA configuration, visit http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1239,Q,545954,mpdcNav_GID,1538.asp.

Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention. February 6-10, 2006, has been designated as National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week in the United States. The American Bar Association has developed an extensive website, including a “toolkit” containing various facts, figures, activities and projects related to the problem of violence in teen dating relationships. Details at <http://www.abanet.org/unmet/toolkitmaterials.html>.

CCTV Cameras To Be Deployed. The MPDC plans to activate its Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) system to support public safety operations during the Major Cities Chiefs Conference in DC, from February 6-12, 2006. In addition to activating cameras that are part of its existing CCTV network, the MPDC plans to deploy additional, temporary cameras in the area of F Street, NW, between 13th and 14th Streets, NW. Details at <http://app.mpdc.dc.gov/newsroom/newsroom.asp?sid=312000>.

① View the preliminary January crime statistics — for each police district and the city as a whole — by going to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1239,q,543329.asp>

① Burglary is often a crime of opportunity. To help lower the risk of your home being burglarized, the MPDC offers a variety of safety tips at:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1237,q,547557,mpdcNav_GID,1553,mpdcNav_|.asp

① For more information on the free inspections, including specific dates and locations, go to:
http://ddot.dc.gov/ddot/cwp/view,a,1252,q,634868,ddotNav_GID,1610.asp

① Details on DC's child restraint law, including the penalties for violations, are available at:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1237,q,547368,mpdcNav_GID,1549,mpdcNav_|.asp

DATA BOX

Homicides as of 2/3/06

- ◆ 2006: 15
- ◆ 2005: 16
- ◆ % Change: -6.2%
- ◆ Closure Rate: 46.7% (7 closures)

Adult Arrests week end. 1/28/06

- ◆ Total: 976
- ◆ Weapons: 32
- ◆ Robbery: 13
- ◆ Auto Theft: 13
- ◆ Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 66

Juvenile Activity week end. 1/28/06

- ◆ Arrests: 68
- ◆ Curfew Violators: 34
- ◆ Truants: 77

Firearm Recoveries as of 2/1/06

- ◆ January: 248
- ◆ 2006 Total: 248
- ◆ 2005 Total (year-end): 2,344

Traffic Fatalities as of 2/3/06

- ◆ 2006: 3
- ◆ 2005: 3
- ◆ % Change: Unchanged

Information, ideas, or comments about this service? Send an e-mail to **KEVIN MORISON**, MPDC's Director of Corporate Communications, at kevin.morison@dc.gov. Would you like to have this information e-mailed to you? Just go to our Website and register with Crimereports.com.

mpdc.dc.gov